

REMARKS:

In the Office Action mailed on July 7, 2004, the Examiner objected to the drawings because they did not show all of the features in each claim, objected all of the claims because of an inconsistent claim element which was a typographical error and because of one element lacking proper antecedent basis, rejected all of the claims under 35 U.S.C. section 102 (b) as being anticipated by Hotea (US 5,653,616), rejected claims 6 and 7 as having functional limitations, and further rejected claim 7 as suing the word “rotate” when the proper word is “flex”.

With this amendment claim 4 has been cancelled and claims 1, 5, 6, and 7 have been modified. Claims 1 - 3 and 5 - 9 remain in the application.

Claims 1 and 2 have been modified so that the “inwardly projecting contact” is now “inwardly projecting contact area” which is represented in the drawings as element numbers 57, 58, 87, and 88. Accordingly, the objections to the drawings and one of the objections to the claims regarding the “inwardly projecting contact area” have been overcome.

All of the claims were objected to because of a lack of proper antecedent basis in claim 1 line 6 which introduces “two spaced part sidewalls” where there is only support for the recitation of “at least one of said sidewalls”. Claim 1 has been modified to make reference to “at least one of said sidewalls” instead of “two spaced apart sidewalls”.

Regarding the rejection of the Hotea reference (US 5,653,616) anticipating the entire claimed invention, the claims as amended herein include, among other things:

- a) the flat contacting area at an angle to the at least one sidewall from which it came;
- b) the flat contact surface disposed at an angle to the sidewall opposed to said one sidewall when in the unmated position; and
- c) the flat contact surface of the at least one inwardly projecting contact area being in coplanar contacting relationship with the flat surface of the male terminal when the male terminal is inserted into the passageway.

The Hotea reference includes none of the above elements. The Examiner is correct in pointing out that element 62, as shown in figure 4 of Hotea, is a flat surface and that it is at an angle to sidewall 40. However, element 62 comes from sidewall 46 and does not come from sidewall 40 to which the Examiner attributes the angle required in the claims. Next, the flat surfaces 62 of Hotea, as shown in figure 4, are parallel to each other in the unmated portion rather than at an angle to each other as required in the claims. Finally, after the male terminal is inserted into the passageway of Hotea, the flat surfaces will move away from each other resulting in those flat surfaces being at an angle to the flat surface of the mating male terminal rather than being coplanar to it as required by the claims.

Also claim 7 requires that the side walls flex along an axis parallel to the direction of insertion. This is best shown in figures 11 and 12 of the drawings of the subject application where the sidewalls open away from each other at a side of the terminal rather than at its distal end. The Hotea reference, as best shown in Figure 4, shows the side walls 46 flexing about an axis perpendicular to the terminal receiving passageway rather than parallel to it where the walls open away from each other at their distal ends rather than at their sides. Therefore claim 7 further distinguishes over Hotea.

In order to sustain a rejection under section 102, all of the elements of the claimed invention must appear in a single reference. The Hotea reference cited by the Examiner does not disclose or suggest at least any one of the above elements. Since not all of the elements in the claimed invention appear in any of the cited references, then the rejections under 35 U.S.C. sections 102 (b) have been overcome.

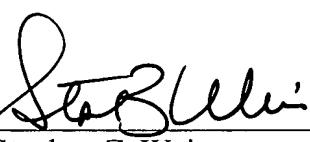
Claims 7 and 8 have been amended by adding structural language which supports the functional language and claim 7 has also been amended by deleting the words “rotate along” and inserting in its place the words “flex about”.

Since all of the objections and rejections have been overcome, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow all of the claims remaining in this application to grant into a patent.

Respectfully submitted,
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